MEDICAL OFFICER'S REPORT.

To the Chairman and Members of the Walsoken Urban District Council.

GENTLEMEN,

The Annual Report, which I again have the honour of submitting to you for the past year ending December 31st, 1913, is again of a very satisfactory character, as you, in common with the adjoining Town of Wisbech, have enjoyed a very remarkable immunity from illnesses of an infectious and contagious nature; while it is also gratifying to note that there were fewer deaths in the district during the year than for many years previous, and consequently an exceptionally low death rate, which is, I believe, a record one. This alone giving a good idea of the healthy and sanitary condition of the district.

Reviewing the various zymotic diseases :—

MEASLES was by far the most prevalent, especially during the months of April, May and June. There were 25 cases notified to me; the disease spread into the locality from the neighbouring town. Fortunately the cases were mild in character, and only 1 death was caused by this malady.

WHOOPING COUGH was again scarcely found this year.

SCARLET FEVER existed in 5 cases, the same in number as during last year, the cases were mild in character, and gave but little cause for anxiety.

DIPHTHERIA was only found in 1 case, and this in an outlying part of the district.

TYPHOID FEVER—4 cases of this illness were notified; 3 of them being in one house, the cases were mild in character.

ERYSIPELAS, which was entirely absent the previous year was found to exist in but 3 cases.

In recapulating certain facts, which it is now imperative for me to do, I would draw your attention to

(*a*) That the health of the district throughout the year has been again exceptional. There has been no serious outbreak of disease to contend with; the employment being mainly agricultural doubtless adds greatly to this.

Many visits and inspections of the district have been made during the year, frequently with the Sanitary Inspector. During our visits we have found many improvements carried out in the various houses, as well as defects remedied, whilst nuisances complained of have been but very few, and have been remedied as soon as possible.

The condition of many of the defective yards have been made far more sanitary.

(*b*) In the more populated parts, we have endeavoured to keep the houses, places, yards, etc. in as cleanly a condition as possible.

(*c*) In cases of infection we have endeavoured to prevent the spread of these illnesses by isolation, removal to the Infectious Hospital, and a very liberal supply of disinfectants.

(*d*) The supply of milk, is, as previously through vendors, who bring into the district the milk from the surrounding country, consequently there are no milk shops existing. The quality and quantity have been very satisfactory.

(*e*) It has not been found necessary to condemn any food-stuffs, the condition of such being highly satisfactory.

(*f*) The Water Supply is in common with Wisbech, from the Marham Hills, is supplied under a constant high pressure, abundant and excellent in quality.

(*g*) The System of Sewerage is artificial and is working well. Both the larger and smaller drains have given good results.

(*h*) Where the sewers are unable to reach owing to the scattered district, cess-pool accommodation is essential, practically no complaints have arisen from these during the year.

(*i*) The removal of House Refuse continues to be done by scavenger's carts regularly and has been done satisfactory and well. The streets and roads are being kept in a cleanly and good condition.

(*k*) The Housing Accommodation appears to meet the requirements of the district, a few houses have been erected but no complaint of over-crowding has reached me.

Under the Town Planning Act the complete survey of the district has been made and in all cases were considered necessary that improvement should be made, in all, with the exception of 2 or 3, these have been done, many roofs repaired, ventilation improved, yards properly drained, houses made more habitable and generally much more cleanly. There exists now

no houses unfit for habitation, the two houses closed temporaily having now been put in good repair and it has not been found necessary to issue any fresh closing order.

The satisfactory, cleanly, and sanitary conditions continue at the Printing Factory, and, as formerly, is well looked after, great efforts are made to add to the comforts of those working there.

The number of Births during the year was 95 compared with the smaller number of 88 last year. Of these 44 were males and 51 femails, giving a birth rate of 23.1 per 1000 of the population.

The number of deaths from all causes was 32 only, compared with 49 the previous year, giving the remarkably low death rate of 7·7 per 1000, to this number it is necessary now to add the deaths of 9 persons, who died whilst away from their homes.

Amongst the deaths are included the deaths of 4 infant children, which is a much smaller number than formerly, giving an infantile death rate of 42.1 per 1000 of the nett births, again a very highly satisfactory record.

The number of cases of Pulmonary Phthises were 4, compared with 14, and ss well 2 cases of Tnberculossis were notified.

Herewith I beg to hand you the tabular statements of births, sickness, and and mortality for this period, together with records of previous years for comparison.

I remain, Gentlemen,

Very faithfully yours,

HARRY GROOM, M.D.,

Medical Officer of Health.